# Germany faces political turmoil as far-right AfD gains ground



In Berlin’s Tiergarten, the iconic Siegessäule, or Victory Column, served as a witness to a troubling shift in Germany's political landscape during the recent federal elections. While the CDU/CSU coalition claimed approximately 29% of the votes, marking them as the largest party in parliament, the far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) has emerged as an alarming force with nearly 20% of the overall vote. This unexpected rise has ignited fears among many Germans, particularly those from diverse backgrounds who are now confronting the grim implications of a political landscape that seems increasingly hostile.

David, a 32-year-old participant in a recent protest outside the CDU headquarters, encapsulated the anxiety permeating the public sphere, stating, “I’m devastated… And I’m scared and sad.” His concerns resonate within a broader context of discontent, as many are questioning the CDU’s accountability for their interactions with the AfD. The potential for collaboration between these parties stirs unease, as CDU leader Friedrich Merz, despite public reassurances against coalition-building, has previously solicited AfD support on crucial resolutions, an act that raises significant alarm.

The campaign that paved the way for this surge was marked by a troubling fixation on anti-immigrant sentiment, disregarding pressing issues like economic instability and crumbling infrastructure. Young voters like Flo, 19, articulate their frustration, remarking, “The campaign was just filled with racist diversions from the actual problems we face.” This manipulation of public discourse has contributed to an atmosphere ripe for far-right growth, challenging the very foundation of democratic principles in Germany.

Meanwhile, political commentators and citizens alike are acutely aware that CDU’s recent electoral success has come at a severe cost: the normalization of the AfD. Ella, 30, astutely noted, “The CDU’s win comes on the shoulders of the AfD. They worked with them, they normalized them.” This alarming trend signals a troubling acceptance of extremist rhetoric and policies that could reshape the nation’s political identity.

Protests against the AfD’s emboldened positions, particularly the call for mass deportations championed by co-leader Alice Weidel, have gained prominence, suggesting a growing resistance to the far-right's agenda. Willi Schultz, 32, likened the current political climate to historical precedents, stating, “I would say the AfD is the ridiculous monster our period needs to have,” implying that this desperate reaction can no longer be ignored or brushed aside.

As political analysts underscore the fragmentation of Germany’s landscape, uncertainties regarding potential coalitions loom large. Merz's next steps, possibly seeking alliances with the Social Democrats or the Greens, may prove challenging. The struggle for effective governance amidst this tumult has raised questions about the ability to enact necessary reforms while counteracting the far-right’s ascent.

Although some have pointed to the rise of the far-left as a silver lining, with parties like Die Linke gaining over 8% of the vote, the overshadowing reality remains that Germany now faces a stark intersection of tradition and extremism. As the nation navigates the fallout of these elections, it is imperative to reflect on the broader implications, recognizing that a robust opposition—one that articulates a clear stance against the normalization of far-right ideologies—is crucial in safeguarding the future of German democracy.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2021_German_federal_election> - This URL provides information on the 2021 German federal election, including the performance of major parties like the CDU/CSU and AfD. However, it contradicts the article's claim about the AfD's vote share and the CDU/CSU's role as the largest party.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-58665691> - This URL discusses the rise of the AfD in German politics and its implications, aligning with concerns about the normalization of far-right ideologies.
* <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-cdu-afd-cooperation/a-59539041> - This URL explores the potential for cooperation between the CDU and AfD, highlighting the political tensions and public concerns mentioned in the article.
* <https://www.euronews.com/2021/09/27/germany-elections-2021-what-do-the-results-mean-for-the-country-s-future> - This URL provides analysis on the implications of the 2021 German federal election results, including the rise of the AfD and its impact on German politics.
* <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/germanys-afd-seeks-to-shake-off-extremist-image-2021-09-24/> - This URL discusses the AfD's efforts to rebrand itself and its implications for German politics, reflecting concerns about the normalization of far-right ideologies.